

Thesis Title Sociodemographic Factors Influencing
Breastfeeding Duration and its Effect on
Subsequent Fertility in Nigeria

Name Olapeju Ore-Ofe Adenusi

Degree Master of Arts
(Population and Family Planning Research)

Thesis Supervisory Committee
Suporn Koetsawang, M.D.
Buppha Sirirassamee, Ph.D.

Date of Graduation 14 March B.E. 2537 (1994)

ABSTRACT

This study aims at examining the sociodemographic factors which influence breastfeeding duration and the association between breastfeeding duration and subsequent birth interval.

The study used secondary data from the Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey which was conducted by the Federal Office of Statistics in 1990. The sample size of the study is 1246 currently married women who went into union within 10 years prior to time of survey and with at least two children within 5 years prior to time of survey. For the purpose of this study, the breastfeeding duration of the next to last child, and the interval between the last two births were considered.

The data was analyzed employing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS/PC+). Univariate analysis included frequency run to describe the general and background characteristics of the respondents, while, bivariate analysis such as means, t-test and crosstabulations (chi-square and contingency coefficient) , were used in establishing associations between sociodemographic factors and breastfeeding duration and secondly between this duration and

subsequent birth interval.

The results show that over half (59%) of the respondents reside in rural areas, 58% had some form of education with 49% involved in non agricultural work. The mean age of the sample was 24 years with 78% of them in the age group 20-29 years. The mean number of Children Ever born is 3.0.

Breastfeeding practice was found to be universal (95%) but the duration however varied amongst different sociodemographic groups. The mean duration of breastfeeding for the sample population was 14 months with a mean length of birth interval of 28 months.

Of all the sociodemographic factors examined, residence, education, religion, type of marriage and place of birth of child were the most important in terms of influencing breastfeeding duration. Nevertheless, an imminent decline in this practice was observed. An association between breastfeeding duration and subsequent birth interval was established. This however, is not absolute since other factors such as contraceptive use which may have an effect on this interval could not be examined due to limitations in the data.

Based on the findings, a number of recommendations were made. These include mainly the preservation of breastfeeding practices where it is presently common and encouraging it amongst target groups where the practice shows imminent decline. Secondly, providing safe, appropriate and effective means of contraception to breastfeeding women at the appropriate time to prevent unwanted pregnancies.